

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Table of Contents

Accountability	2
Calculators	2
Classroom Activities	3
Content	5
Scrap/Graph Paper.....	5
Homebound Students	6
Integrity Guide	6
Listening Portion of ELA	6
Make up Days.....	6
MI-Access	7
Ordering Materials.....	8
Paper/Pencil Testing	8
Paper/pencil waivers	9
Performance Tasks.....	9
Power Failures.....	12
Practice	12
Reporting	13
Secure Site.....	13
Sick Students	14
Software.....	14
Supports and Accommodations.....	16
Technology.....	19
Technology-enhanced item functionality	21
Test Administration.....	21
Test Tickets	27
Text-to-Speech	28
Training	28

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Accountability

- 1. You stated that the test will not be used to determine a school's status as a focus/priority school; however, what will the test results mean for schools already identified as focus/priority? If the test results will not even be factored into current status, how are the schools being evaluated this year?**

This still requires approval from USDOE and actual approval of Michigan's request may not be received until late summer or early fall.

- 2. If a student, for whatever reason, starts but is unable to complete a test, do they count as a tested student or a non-tested student for accountability purposes (95%)?**

If a student's content area assessment was complete enough to have met the minimum attemptedness to receive a valid test score, the student would be considered as having participated in the state assessment for the content area. In the event a student's test is not complete enough to meet attemptedness and thus does not receive a valid score, the student would be considered as having not participated in the content area assessment. For issues relating to test validity and test security, the MDE does not publish the minimum attemptedness criteria.

Calculators

- 3. Will students be able to select WHICH calculator type they wish to use (basic, scientific, graphing), or will a specific type be provided by grade level? We have 5th-6th graders used to using graphing calculators, for example.**

The specific calculator will be tied to the specific question in the online assessment. Calculators are not permitted for grades 3-5. Grade 6 will display a Basic Calculator, Grades 7 and 8 will display a Scientific Calculator, and Grade 11 will have a Scientific and Graphing Calculator. For more information on calculator use, please refer to the [Spring 2015 M-STEP Calculator Policy](#).

- 4. Are there practice items specifically for students to become familiar with the embedded calculators?**

A Calculator Practice page is available on the M-STEP Online Tools Training link that can be accessed through Google Chrome at <https://wbte.drccdirect.com/MI/portals/mi/>.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Classroom Activities

- 5. What happens when students are absent for classroom activity for paper/pencil version? Do we wait until the makeup? Is this a district decision?**

If it is possible for the student to make up the CA before the Performance Task is given to the class then it would still be possible to take the PT with the class. If this is not possible, the student will have to take the CA and Performance Task on a make-up day.

- 6. Can the Classroom Activity be repeated every day for 3 days before the Performance Task?**

No.

- 7. Are teachers allowed to guide the class and prompt students in the Classroom Activity discussion, or do they have to stick to the script? May additional materials, such as a graphic organizer, be used?**

The Classroom Activity (CA) is a background building activity for the Performance Task. Teachers and students interact. Students are not answering test questions. The CA has parts that are scripted that must be read aloud by the teacher administering the CA and parts that give suggestions for teacher/student discussion. Other materials are not needed. Any notes used by students during the CA may not be used in the Performance Task. Teachers may see the CA in advance.

- 8. If a student is present for the Classroom Activity but then is absent for the Performance Task (and it has been longer than 3 days), can the student experience the CA again?**

In these rare cases, schools should use their best judgment considering the student's individual needs..

- 9. When will the Classroom Activity be delivered to the school?**

They will be delivered about 2 weeks prior to the test window with other materials required for testing. Schools should, at this time, have the Classroom Activities in their possession.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

10. Is the Performance Task and the Classroom Activity the same for all grade levels?

Each grade will have a Classroom Activity designed for that grade level. There will be several possible Performance Tasks for each grade level based on the same classroom activity. In other words, even though all students experience the same Classroom Activity, students will not all receive the same Performance Task.

11. Does a certified teacher in the specific subject need to teach the classroom activity/performance task? Can a certified teacher in any subject or a sub do these activities?

Classroom activities were designed to be administered, when possible, by the student's teacher for the subject being assessed. They must meet the minimum qualifications of:

- *An employee of the district who is a certified or licensed educational professional or,*
- *A substitute teacher who is certified and employed by the district on an as needed basis or,*
- *Someone who has been a certified teacher but does not currently possess a teaching certificate due to retirement or a change of career and has been approved by the district M-STEP coordinator as a qualified administrator.*

The Performance Task is a test session and must be administered by a qualified test administrator.

12. If we are not administering the Performance Task for Grade 11, do we still have to administer the Classroom Activity?

No. For Grade 11, only administer the Classroom Activity if you are administering the Performance Task. For paper/pencil takers, please keep in mind that the Performance Task is administered on Day 2 of the ELA and mathematics test. If you are not administering the Performance Task on Day 2, there is not a need to also administer the Classroom Activity prior to that.

13. Is it possible to conduct a Classroom Activity teaching experience with a large group, then administer the Performance Task to smaller, breakout groups?

Classroom Activities are designed to stimulate teacher/student interaction and engagement. Although there is not a rule prohibiting the presentation of the CA to a large group, MDE believes it is best practice for the Classroom Activity to mirror normal classroom instruction.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Content

- 14. Math and ELA are ONLY testing Common Core State Standards, is that correct?**

Math and ELA tests are assessing Michigan Standards.

- 15. Knowing that some grades start testing in April, are concepts that would be taught in late April and May not assessed?**

The test is designed to measure what students know and are able to do at this time of their school year.

- 16. What portion is SBAC content and what portion is Michigan Developed?**

ELA and Math are SBAC Content. Science and Social Studies are Michigan developed.

- 17. Will the writing portion of the tests have checklists for students? Are rubrics available?**

The Performance Tasks will include a checklist but not a scoring rubric. The scoring rubrics are posted online for use in the classroom during test preparation.

Scrap/Graph Paper

- 18. What size grid will be used for the graph paper for Grades 3-5?**

The graph paper provided by MDE is black line grids of 1/2 cm.

- 19. Do we have to use the graph paper MDE ships, or can students use the types we usually have in class (dot paper, grid paper, coordinate plane paper, etc.)?**

*Please see the MDE Policy on Scratch and Graph paper, which is located at:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Scratch_Paper_20150326_485480_7.pdf?20150327130151*

- 20. For ELA or Math, may students use scrap paper to write before typing, calculating, etc.?**

*Please see the MDE Policy on Scratch and Graph Paper, located at
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Scratch_Paper_20150326_485480_7.pdf?20150327130151*

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Homebound Students

- 21. What is the process for ordering paper/pencil materials for a homebound student? Is there an approval process? Do we follow the paper pencil schedule?**

For homebound students, an Off-site testing request must be completed and additional materials ordered in late March/early April. All paper and pencil administrations must follow the state established calendar. Follow the directions provided for the secure site and order the appropriate grade level test booklet, answer documents, and any other required materials. The teacher will require a CD player if they wish to use the ELA Listening CD. There is also a script if they choose not to use the CD.

Integrity Guide

- 22. Does an assessment integrity guide exist yet for the M-STEP?**

At this time we are still using the Assessment Integrity Guide put into effect in 2009.

- 23. Will posters need to be taken down in the testing room during a test session?**

Yes, all rooms must have posters and any other materials removed if they relate to content or testing. Please review the Assessment Integrity Guide for more details.

Listening Portion of ELA

- 24. How will the listening portion of the paper/pencil ELA be administered? CD? Teacher script?**

For online testing it will be imbedded in the test (all students will need headphones for ELA). Paper/pencil will have both a CD and a script and will be needed in Part 2 of ELA. The school can make the decision if they will use the CD or the script.

Make up Days

- 25. Will students be able to take any make up testing beyond their grade level testing window? Or will they only be allowed to take the test during that window?**

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Make up must be completed within the grade-level testing window. See the 2015 Michigan Statewide Assessment Transition document on the M-STEP web page for a complete schedule.

MI-Access

26. Is MI-Access online?

Functional Independence is available online except for Expressing Ideas. For Supported Independence and Participation that process is unchanged – however, the scoring document is now an online answer document.

27. If a school has requested paper/pencil for MI Access, does the administrator still need to enter scores online?

Yes, for Participation and Supported Independence.

28. Can a student with an IEP take different tests for various content areas?

Yes. If a student is eligible to take a MI-Access Functional Independence assessment, their Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team has the flexibility within Michigan's assessment system to have the student participate in the MI-Access Functional Independence or M-STEP for different content areas. For example, an IEP Team might decide that its fourth- grade student will take the M-STEP for mathematics and science and MI-Access Functional Independence for English language arts (ELA), or some other combination. Before making a determination on the appropriate assessment for your student, please read the ELA and mathematics information in the M-STEP Spring 2015 Michigan Assessment Transition document at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Assessment_Transition_FINAL_11-13-14_473989_7.pdf

Please note the following:

- *The M-STEP ELA assessment consists of reading, writing, and listening and cannot be split.*
- *Both the M-STEP ELA and mathematics tests include constructed response items.*

Keep in mind that students taking MI-Access Participation or Supported Independence must do so for all content areas.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 29. For 11th grade, can Functional Independence students take ACT and/or WorkKeys, and/or any parts of the M-STEP as well as some parts of FI? Can they mix and match at grade 11?**

11th grade Functional Independence students can take parts of M-STEP and parts of FI. FI students may take ACT or WorkKeys if desired, but there is no requirement for them to do so.

- 30. FI: Expressing ideas is paper/pencil only. Does this mean we need to order audio CDs for students who have this test read to them?**

Yes, FI: Expressing Ideas is paper/pencil only. There is a combined audio for Accessing Print and Expressing Ideas and it must be ordered.

- 31. Will the math paper/pencil response grid be something that MI-Access students will also be using?**

The mathematics paper/pencil test response grid is used only on M-STEP.

- 32. Where does the Assessment Administrator enter the P/SI scores?**

M-STEP and MI-Access work the same way 1) Pre ID and create test sessions in the BAA Secure Site; 2) eDIRECT pulls the information from the Secure Site; 3) The Assessment administrator enters the P/SI scores in eDIRECT using the test ticket for that student into the online answer document.

Ordering Materials

- 33. If we're taking the online assessment do we need to place any orders for materials or will all materials be available online?**

Materials will be sent automatically to the schools based on student Pre-ID. The Test Administration Manual (TAM) for online and paper/pencil test administration can be downloaded from eDIRECT at <https://mi.drcedirect.com/>.

Paper/Pencil Testing

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 34. In the M-STEP Assessment Transition paperwork under the heading “Paper/Pencil Test Session Information” it states that Day 1 ELA is the paper/pencil test that will include parts 1 & 2 (fixed-form plus a listening part); Day 2 ELA paper/pencil test will be the Performance Task. However, in the most recent Spotlight it states in the Recently Asked Questions that the ELA performance task needs to be administered in 2 separate sessions. Does that mean that the ELA test will take 3 days? Is it ok to administer the 2nd part of the ELA Performance Task on a make-up day (April 16, April 30 & May 21)?**

The paper/pencil test allows 2 days for administration, both tests must be administered within the designated 2 days. The classroom activity can be done on the Monday before testing begins, Day 1, or the morning of Day 2 before they administer the Performance Task.

- 35. After the paper/pencil test administration is complete, when and how should schools return test documents for scoring?**

A calendar is printed as an appendix in the online TAM for paper and pencil test returns. In general they must be returned within a few days of the end of that grades test window (so there will be three different shipments). It is wise to save the boxes the tests arrive in. The materials will include a return kit that has Fed-Ex airbills and scoring labels with directions.

Paper/pencil waivers

- 36. Could a middle school give the Science and Social Studies online and the ELA and math as pencil/paper? Or, is it all to be one way or the other?**

Schools were asked to submit a waiver if they wanted paper and pencil testing and the expectation is that all subject area assessments must be administered either online or via paper/pencil. The only exception is for students who need a specific accommodation to take the assessments via paper/pencil.

Performance Tasks

- 37. On the ELA Performance Task, will the highlighting and sticky notes be saved from the Part 1 to Part 2 so that when students log in the second day of the PT their highlighting and notes from day 1 would still be available to them?**

No, the highlighting and sticky notes do not move from Part 1 to Part 2.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 38. Do students have to complete the ELA performance tasks in one sitting?
Are the performance tasks timed?**

The online Performance Task for ELA is in 2 parts. They can be taken on the same day with a scheduled break, or on two separate days. The paper/pencil format must be taken on Day 2. They are not timed, but there are approximate times for each test. For approximate times, please see the Spring 2015 Michigan Statewide Assessment Transition Guide on www.michigan.gov/baa.

- 39. Can students work on 2 different parts of the performance task in ELA even if they are in the same testing session? How does this relate to TSM?**

Students could work on 2 different parts of the ELA in the same session. The student logs on to a session/part based on their ticket. They need a unique ticket for each part. They will log on to the part designated on their ticket. This does not relate to the TSM. The TSM will cache the appropriate content for up to 150 simultaneous users.

- 40. When will the USDOE provide final approval for Michigan not to test part of its curriculum in Grade 11 (the performance tasks)?**

The approval (or denial) from USDOE may not be received until late summer or early fall. We are unsure at this time, however, if the performance task is not required for 11th grade.

- 41. What are the test blueprints for the assessments for the performance tasks (CCSS)?**

Blueprints are not provided for M-STEP.

- 42. Can the ELA Classroom Activity take place the same day at the Performance Task? I have seen that this is an option for Math, but ELA states the Classroom Activity must take place 1-3 days before the Performance Task.**

The CA for both Math and ELA can be on the same day of the Performance Task.

- 43. Which mode of writing will my students encounter on the M-STEP Performance Task?**

Students should be prepared to respond to all modes of writing according to the chart below.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Grade	Writing Mode
3-5	Informational: Students will write to inform an audience, making reference to the source material.
3-5	Opinion: Students will form and defend an opinion, supported by information from the source material.
3-8	Narrative: Source material will serve as inspiration for the constructed response, <i>text-inspired</i> rather than <i>text-based</i> .
6-8 and 11	Explanatory: Students will write to explain a subject, analyzing source material in their explanation.
6-8 and 11	Argumentative: Students will compose an argument, using evidence from the source material to form and support claims. In grades 7-11, students will also use the source material to form counterclaims.

44. For the Performance Task, we are under the impression that the task responses will be entered on the computer so a computer is required for the Performance Task. Is this correct?

- *For online testing, the Performance Task is administered online and does require a computer.*
- *For paper/pencil testing, the Performance Task will also be paper/pencil (no computers will be required).*

45. For the ELA Performance Tasks, can students write their essay on paper and then type online?

Yes, a student may use scratch paper for pre-writing activities before entering the complete response into the computer. However, schools should take timing into consideration, as drafting and pre-writing may increase testing times. If a student "breaks" for more than 20 minutes (using this time for pre-writing, drafting, etc.), the student will need to login to the testing session again. In addition, any scratch paper must be collected before the student leaves the testing room; any scratch paper used by students must be shredded immediately per test administration guidelines.

For the paper/pencil format, students should mark in their test booklets. They will not need additional scratch paper.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

46. When the students are taking the Performance Task, can they go back to review a question?

The online assessment does permit students to review a question and change their answer during the test session window. Please note that if there is inactivity more than 20 minutes, the students test will require re-login. The student will not be able to review a question or change an answer after the end of the instructional day.

Power Failures

47. What if the power goes out and it's the end of the school day?

Of course every scenario is different, but the TSM will retain student responses and then send them to DRC once power resumes. However, all test sessions started on that day will be locked at the end of the instructional day and cannot be re-opened.

Practice

48. What technology found in the online versions of M-STEP would be "new" technologies that students with IEPs/504's would need to practice in the classroom prior to using these features on a summative assessment?

Please review the Supports and Accommodation Table at www.michigan.gov/baa. Previews, Sample Item Sets, SPOTLIGHT and the Supports and Accommodations Manual for more details about accommodations. There will also be an Online Tools Training (OTT) that is important for all students to complete. An Accommodation Preview will be available as well. Although it is targeted to the lower grades it does give teachers an opportunity to see available accommodations.

49. If students are struggling with using the tools (click and drag, calculator, etc.) during the assessment, can you show them how to use them?

You can help with directions, but you cannot assist with tools during the assessment. The question highlights the importance of all teachers and students completing the Sample Item Sets and Online Tools Training so this situation does not arise during testing.

50. Which platform should schools use for students to practice for the performance tasks?

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Students should use the Sample Item Sets to become familiar with the test tools. The Sample Item Sets may be accessed through Google Chrome at <http://mi-web-td.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi/>. Fully functional Sample Item Sets should be accessed through the INSIGHT test engine when it becomes available in your school or district. The Performance Tasks require no special tools or practice that would not be used during regular testing. Samples of the Performance Task are provided at www.michigan.gov/mstep so teachers and students can review what the Performance Task entails.

- 51. Does the preview accurately depict the student login process? Will there be training materials for proctors along these lines?**

Test Directions are being printed and sent as a test material to teachers. It will be scripted and will help Test Administrators walk students through the log-on process.

- 52. Will the practice tests for each grade in the preview portion have audio? Will it need to be activated or does it just happen?**

There will not be audio in the sample item sets initially, however, once your school or district has installed the TSM (Test Server Manager) and the INSIGHT software, the items will be fully equipped with audio

Reporting

- 53. When will parents receive test scores if results are not being released until July? Will schools have to send them out at the start of the next year? Is the state handling this?**

Date requirements are still in progress, but it is anticipated that parent reports will be available in Fall of 2015.

Secure Site

- 54. What are the seating requirements for M-STEP? Is it the same as ACT so that all desks facing same direction, number of feet seated apart, etc.?**

There are no specific seating requirements other than maintaining good security so that students are not able to look at another student's screen.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Sick Students

55. If a student gets sick and has to go home, can they finish a test later? What if the student is Special Ed and needs additional time?

...

*If a student does not complete an assessment on the same day which the test was begun, the test will be placed in a “locked” state. **Locked tests cannot be unlocked.***

If it is unlikely that a student will finish any single test in a single day, a paper/pencil test should be ordered. If no paper/pencil test was ordered and the student is unable to complete the test in a single day, two options are available:

- *No action — the test will be submitted as-is in an incomplete state.*
- *The school and the parents can mutually agree that the student will take a paper/pencil version of the test. This test must be ordered through additional materials and the student must complete the entire test within the remaining test window. The incomplete online test must be invalidated by the Building Coordinator (see the Building Coordinator section on pages 45–47 for more information on invalidating tests).*

Software

56. Will the online portions of test be administered through a lock-down browser (disabling all other activities on the computer while students are testing)?

Yes. INSIGHT will lock down the computer and disable all other activities.

57. What are technology enhanced items on the mathematics test?

With Technology Enhanced items, students may use technology as a tool (for example graphing or marking passages within a document). The Sample Item Sets for M-STEP will enable students to practice technology enhanced items.

58. If a student goes on “break,” will they be able to resume the test on their return?

The device can be paused for 20 minutes without using a ticket to log back into the test. If the test is paused for longer than 20 minutes, it will time out and can be re-opened (IN THE SAME INSTRUCTIONAL DAY) by reusing the original student test ticket. Tickets are secure and should be taken up by teachers immediately after the first login. They could be used again within the instructional day. At the end of the instructional day tests are locked and cannot be re-opened.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 59. We are beginning to practice with our students for M-STEP. When the practice site for M-STEP by grade level becomes available, will it include the platform that will be used for the ELA and math performance task?**

Sample Item Sets are available now for ELA and mathematics, and now social studies and science. These practice items are available through Google Chrome at <https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi/ott1>. Once your district or school has installed the TSM and the INSIGHT software, the online Sample Item Sets can be accessed directly in INSIGHT. Just open INSIGHT and click on the Online Tools Training (OTT) link.

- 60. Is the usability of the online tools the same on PCs, Chromebooks and iPads?**

Yes.

- 61. How many updates to the software are anticipated after it is released on the 25th? For example, how many times will they have to re-distribute the software after the initial roll-out?**

There should be no software updates after the INSIGHT release on the 25th.

- 62. Within the BAA Secure Site, how can Technology Directors be given rights to: Access DRC software (due out Feb. 25); download the INSIGHT software platform to start problem solving; and test driving our technology set-up?**

Instructions have been posted to the TRIG Awareness website.

- 63. Will there be a need to point devices to multiple TSM servers, or can we point to one TSM (IP) and have the back-end load balance accordingly?**

Devices are pointed to a single TSM server or a load balancer address serving multiple TSMs for content caching. Response servers cannot be load balanced.

- 64. Will the new installer uninstall the old version of INSIGHT automatically?**

It will have to be uninstalled before installing the new INSIGHT.

- 65. Will there be a spell checker in the actual test?**

A spell checker will not be available.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Supports and Accommodations

66. Can students with accommodations be mixed with students without accommodations?

Yes, unless the accommodation would interfere with or distract the other students.

67. At the high school level, if ACT approves accommodations, is there any paperwork needed to carry those over to the Michigan portions (such as "read aloud")? We used to mark the answer sheet that accommodations were used.

No additional paperwork should be required. The IEP and 504 plan would be sufficient evidence to select the accommodations in eDIRECT for the student.

68. Will students be allowed a reader during ELA writing specific items?

Human readers are allowable as a designated support in grades 3-8 and 11 for test questions and options for both the online and paper/pencil formats. Human readers may read ELA passages in grades 6-8 and 11 only. For additional information, please see

http://www.mi.gov/documents/mde/Michigan_Accommodations_Manual.final_480016_7.pdf

69. Can online ELA passages be printed for students to read from paper?

No. Please do not duplicate any testing materials. The device is also in kiosk mode and the print function is disabled. If students need a paper/pencil test for an accommodation, it can be ordered.

70. In terms of IEP accommodations being implemented during M-STEP testing, is it now considered a standard accommodation for students to use a non-embedded calculator for the entire math assessment as long as it is an accommodation in the student's IEP?

It is a standard accommodation to use a non-embedded calculator if a student cannot use an embedded calculator because of a disability, thus, he or she may use the calculator he or she is familiar with (e.g., large print keys, braille) for grades 6-8 only. However, any non-embedded calculator used by students in these situations must only be used on items on which an embedded calculator is available to use. No calculators of any kind are allowable in grades 3-5. For more information, please see

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

the Supports and Accommodations Table on the M-STEP web page (baa.michigan.gov) under Students Supports and Accommodations.

- 71. Just to verify, if we are doing pencil and paper and we have students that have accommodations to have their test read aloud, do we have to have an actual person read the entire test in groups of no more than 5 students? Will there be audio DVDs?**

Please refer to the Supports and Accommodation Manual at Table at www.michigan.gov/baa for information regarding read-aloud guidelines for mathematics and ELA. There are CDs and DVDs available for Science and Social Studies only.

- 72. Can online testers use a paper multiplication table as an accommodation instead of the online tool?**

This is an accommodation that is available only to students who have a documented disability and require this accommodation based on their IEP. The paper multiplication table can only be used in grade 4 and above.

- 73. For an accommodated student who needs a scribe, can someone type in the response on-line?**

Please refer to Scribing Protocol for M-STEP at: http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/M-STEP_Scribing_Protocol_477116_7.pdf?20150210153448

- 74. Where do I find information for the M-STEP with an EL student?**

Information about ELS taking the M-STEP is found here: http://www.mi.gov/documents/mde/Michigan_Accommodations_Manual.final_480016_7.pdf and will also be included in the Test Administrator Manual (TAM).

- 75. What is the difference between "text-to-speech" and "read aloud"?**

Text-to-Speech is embedded in the online delivery engine. Read aloud is an accommodation provided by a human reader.

- 76. If the MEAP accommodations are on the current IEPs and not the MSTEP, will we need to write an addendum on each IEP to be in compliance for this spring?**

Accommodation requirements should be written in IEPs that address student needs/requirements for both instruction and assessment. They should not have been

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

written test specific. For example if an accommodation was written for tests to be “read aloud” this would not require a change in the IEP. If the change is simply from MEAP to M-STEP, it would not require a change.

77. Is there also speech-to-text features for students who do not type well?

No, unless you are taking a Paper/Pencil test and the student uses speech-to-text equipment in regular instruction.

78. Where are designated supports and accommodations “turned on,” and who may do this?

Designated Supports are set up in the eDIRECT system. The person responsible for turning supports ‘On’ in eDIRECT may not be the same person or part of the group of people responsible for selecting supports and accommodations. An educator or a team of educators who know the students’ needs and abilities must make the decision for which Designated Supports are needed. A student’s IEP or 504 team must make the decisions related to which accommodations are needed. However, if paper/pencil materials are needed, schools must order specific materials through the Secure Site. For example, a braille assessment, enlarged print, and glossary reference sheets are examples of materials that must be ordered through the Secure Site. Other materials will be available for download through the Secure Site. However, for specific instructions related to ordering materials and Secure Site use, please refer to the Secure Site Training Site here: http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-22709_57003---,00.html

79. Our district (and school) is taking the test online. We have one student, due to health reasons, who must take the assessment in paper/pencil format. She will be required to take the ELA PT before the online students so the class activity will not have been given yet. Should that student do the class activity alone, take it on a makeup day, or do we need to change our online assessment schedule to accommodate her?

The paper and pencil CA will differ from the online CA so she will have to take it alone. She also needs to test on the designated paper and pencil test days for her grade.

80. When can we order reader scripts for science and social studies?

They can be ordered in the Additional Materials Window (late March early April).

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 81. Is a student who has as an accommodation to be tested in his/her native language tested more accurately?**

Providing a content area assessment in the language in which the student can most demonstrate his or her knowledge will provide a more accurate representation of his or her subject matter knowledge.

- 82. Do EL students requiring an online translated ELA/Math test need to be flagged to receive that test?**

The only test that is in a language other than English is the mathematics test. It is available in a stacked Spanish parallel version and it must be ordered for paper and pencil or "flagged" as a designated support in eDIRECT before the student test tickets are printed.

- 83. Do translated Science/Social Studies online tests exist?**

At this time, the online science and social tests are not available in other languages.

- 84. Does the online version translate into any other languages, or can we assume districts who need a specific language version for a student must order paper?**

The only "language version" of a test is Spanish and it must be ordered for paper/pencil or selected as an accommodation for online testing before the test tickets are created.

Technology

- 85. Will there be technology infrastructure grant assistance to help disadvantaged districts improve their capacity to administer the online tests?**

The Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant (TRIG) was funded over the last three years by the State Legislature with approximately \$140 million to help prepare all schools and districts for online assessments and to improve student achievement. For those schools/districts that are not yet ready to test online, paper and pencil tests are still available as in years past.

The TRIG will fund activities that support the TRIG Mission, Vision, and Values to improve student achievement and online test readiness.

Goals:

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- *Provide opportunities to increase capacity to deliver personalized learning in districts and classrooms.*
- *Create sustainable collaborations that increase districts' abilities to leverage actionable data, maintain reliable technology, and support learning.*
- *Increase the capacity of local districts to provide ubiquitous access for "Any Time, Any Place, Any Way, Any Pace" learning.*

- 86. Clarification on cell phones—if there is a tech issue, are tech support people supposed to check their phones in hall? This is our best method to contact DRC if needed and be at the computer with the problem.**

There is no problem with tech people using their cell phones to resolve an on-sight problem. They will however have to communicate orally with the Call Center and cannot send screen shots of test items. The tech person needs to minimize any potential disruption to the test takers. Please remember that all Tech Personnel must sign the OSA Security Compliance Agreement.

- 87. Please clarify the rules for headphones and keyboards, including iPads and Chromebooks.**

Headphones are required for all students taking the ELA Component 1 and for any students receiving an audio accommodation. External keyboards are required for iPads. Chromebooks have a built-in keyboard.

- 88. Can the installations be pushed (e.g. via System Center to PCs, via Chrome Management to Chromebooks, via MDM to iPads)?**

Yes

- 89. How many Michigan schools will still do paper/pencil this year?**

Approximately 20% of the students in Michigan will be using the paper/pencil M-STEP option for spring 2015.

- 90. Were headsets included in prior technical requirement documents and in the MTRAx evaluation of readiness?**

Headsets were included in prior technical requirements.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

91. What are the desired settings for Chromebooks that are being used for testing?

See the Technology User Guide.

92. With the change from 11" to 14" recommended screen size, will the online test have a horizontal scroll bar on 11" screens?

There are no scroll bars. The text will just be smaller on the 11" screen vs the 14". Documentation says 9.5 - 13". There is no screen size check performed by the software, it will just be harder read the smaller the screen size.

93. Can you set the TSM's to "round robin" or load balance the client requests?

You can set a load balancer to round robin or least connections for content caching.

94. If you are using one DNS entry for the TSM, does that act as a controller to load balance the client requests?

If the DNS entry is pointing to a load balancer for content caching, yes.

Technology-enhanced item functionality

95. Will the test questions still be like a Smarter Balanced test, on which students will need to be able click and drag and use other skills, or does fixed form mean basic one answer multiple choice test items?

The items are similar to Smarter items and students will have "drag and drop" and other options. They will look slightly different in INSIGHT because this is a different test engine than the one used by Smarter Balanced. Fixed form just means that the test forms are created in advance and items are not delivered to students based on how they answered the previous question.

Test Administration

96. Can you explain more details on how to assign kids to testing sessions?

Students must be put into sessions in the BAA Secure Site and they will be pulled into eDIRECT on March 27. Students are always pre-IDed in the BAA Secure Site so as new students are enrolled they should be put in the Secure Site. Once the first pull is

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

made March 27 they will be pulled daily from the Secure Site and added to new or existing sessions in eDIRECT. Directions for assigning students to test sessions are found here:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Spring_Session_Page_Quick_Reference_478716_7.pdf

97. If a student took the MEAP-Access, do they take the online M-STEP?

IEPs determine if MEAP-Access students should take M-STEP or MI-Access assessments. In general, if students are being taught to regular content standards they will take M-STEP, while students taught to alternate content standards will take MI-Access.

98. For the online test, can you test math before ELA?

You may test in the order you wish (online). For security reasons, the paper/pencil test must follow the established schedule.

99. What science content will NOT be assessed as 4th and 7th grade students will not have finished their access to instruction by the testing window?

Students will be assessed on what a student should know and be able to do in the spring of the grade tested.

100. What social studies content in grades 5 and 8 will NOT be assessed this spring because students will not have access to instruction before the testing window opens?

Students will be assessed on what a student should know and be able to do in the spring of the grade tested.

101. Can student use the "pause" feature at the end of the school day or if they get sick? Can they finish the test the following day?

No. Sessions will lock at the end of the day and cannot be re-opened.

102. Can students making up tests finish all the tests on a single day?

If a student is making up tests there is nothing to prohibit him/her from taking all make ups on one day. It should be noted however that student fatigue may certainly

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

be a factor. It should also be noted for online tests, once a test has been started and the student's test ticket used, the test cannot be continued the next day. Tests lock at the end of the instructional day, so ensuring that the student can finish all make up tests in a single day must be taken into consideration. Paper/pencil tests should follow the paper/pencil testing schedule and any make up days should be determined based on the subject area test window and the student's individual needs.

103. What time is considered "end of day?"

End of the day means that tests will be locked at the end of the instructional school day.

104. Will there be an online tracking system to help schools identify/verify what parts of M-STEP all students have completed at any given time? (Not just at the end for test verification)

Tracking can only be done at the Building Coordinator level because it requires access to eDIRECT (which requires permissions set by the District Test Coordinator). Building Coordinators will be able to review testing status generally as "not started," "in progress," and "completed."

105. Must M-STEP be administered by certified staff?

Please see the [Assessment Integrity Guide](#).

106. Even though we have 8th graders taking Algebra at the middle school, will all 8th graders take the 8th grade math assessment?

Students are always expected to test in their enrolled grade in MSDS regardless of their class schedule. If students take a test that is different than their MSDS enrollment they will have their test invalidated as "out of level".

107. Where should students who are on half days take the test?

Students are expected to test at the building to which they are assigned in MSDS.

108. What happens if there is a DDoS attack on the servers?

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Contact your Technology Coordinator and contact the Call Center Support at 877-560-8378.

- 109. Can a Special Education student take M-STEP in Math or Reading and MI-Access in the other subject area? Ex: M-STEP—Math and MI-Access—Reading**

Yes, however it is only possible with Functional Independence (FI). Also understand that Listening and Writing are part of every M-STEP ELA assessment.

- 110. Knowing what we know now about completion being necessary during a single day for a part, and having concerns about some students who have an IEP, can we still order some paper/pencil versions?**

Yes, paper/pencil is recommended for any students who will not finish a session in one day.

- 111. For the paper/pencil version, is the look going to be the same as the MEAP was last year in terms of students filling in bubble sheets in their booklets or on a separate document?**

Students in all grades will bubble answers in an answer document that is separate from the test booklet. 3rd graders will no longer answer questions in their test booklets due to the shift from fall to spring testing. Mathematics will also have gridded response answer types at all grades. ELA and Mathematics will contain short answer and constructed response at all grades.

- 112. Now that the online test is not going to be adaptive, is there going to be randomization of test questions?**

Yes, tests are spiraled at ticket creation.

- 113. Can students be moved from one location to another to complete a test/portion of test if the time allotted by the school is up and most students are done?**

Yes. It must be within the same instructional day and they will need to use their original ticket to log in on the new computer.

- 114. Will bells need to be turned off during administration?**

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Schools should use their own discretion about bells. Please keep in mind that it is important to provide a positive testing environment for students in the least disruptive environment. This may not be possible if bells or intercom messages interrupt the test sessions.

- 115. Do all devices need to be logged off with a password or just the Chromebooks and iPads that are going home with the students?**

Only iPads need a password to exit Guided Access.

- 116. What is happening with the listening portion of the ELA exam if we are administering pencil/paper tests?**

The Listening section is its own part. MDE will provide both a CD and a Script. Buildings may choose which will best meet their needs. The Test Administrators will read through the directions (to the entire class) and play (or read) each passage twice before students answer a set of 3 or 4 questions associated with the passage.

- 117. Can proctors check each students review test screen at the end of testing and prompt them to go back if there are questions that they didn't complete?**

Please review the Assessment Integrity Guide with all personnel so that no prompting of any kind occurs during testing.

- 118. What do we do with a student who has been expelled by the Board of Education? Are we required to test them?**

Expelled students are not required to test unless the expulsion specifically states that services will be provided. Make sure the correct status is reflected in MSDS. Suspended students must be tested.

- 119. How about a student that is court placed in court school, but is still counted by the district?**

MSDS enrollment determines who does the testing. If a student is in a juvenile detention facility of some type, they must be tested with paper/pencil.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

- 120. Can a student pause in one machine, and resume on a different machine in a different room?**

Yes. They will however need to have their ticket/password to log on to the new machine.

- 121. Will there be seating requirements since the assessment is now fixed form? Will test questions be randomized?**

No, there will not be required seating. There are different forms of the online test that will be distributed to the class. Please note however, it is always best practice to set up the lab in a way that students are unable to view another student's screen.

- 122. Do the times listed in the "spring 2015 test session timings" include breaks or do we need to add time in for those?**

The times listed are just approximations. They do not specifically include breaks.

- 123. Can a student end a test without submitting?**

A student can use the Pause or Save features to pause or save a test prior to submission during a test window on the instructional day. Pause is limited to 20 minutes. A test session will be locked at the end of the day in which it was started. Students could simply quit without submitting but that test would be locked and could not be continued the following day. Test Administrators will be directed to check that all assessments have been submitted when testing is completed.

- 124. If the students go to the computer lab to take the test and use the computer as a CD-Player, can we install the audio files on the network or the computer's local drive? This would be in case the computer CD-Drive is not functional.**

No, secure materials (including audio files) cannot be put on a network or computer. Copying and/or installing secure materials is not allowable. For the paper and pencil tests we have included a script as well as the CD so, in the event of a problem with the CD player or the CD itself, the Test Administrator will be able to read the script. Both the CD and the Script are considered to be secure material too.

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

Test Tickets

125. What exactly is a test ticket and how do we get them?

Test tickets are generated in eDIRECT. Test tickets provide students secure access to specific test part. The student's name and password are used to log on to a specific session. Each part has its own ticket. Once the student logs on to the test part that part must be completed by the end of the instructional day. Tickets will be generated for the students by the Building Test Coordinator from sessions created in eDIRECT. Accommodations are also assigned in eDIRECT and must be done before the test ticket is generated.

For other information concerning test tickets, please see the March 5, 2015 Spotlight on Student Assessment and Accountability.

Please note: Test tickets are secure material and chain of custody measures apply. Once testing is completed, test tickets must be returned to the Building Test Coordinator and shredded immediately.

126. Can tickets be generated before testing window opens for a grade?

YES, but please remember that once they have been printed, they are secure materials and will require secure handling, including chain of custody, so the best practice would be to not print too far in advance.

127. When do test tickets expire?

Test tickets expire at the end of the instructional day that they were first used. For example: If one class first uses their ticket to log-in on Monday that ticket could no longer be used on Tuesday. Each session will have its own ticket. This requirement highlights the importance of scheduling students so that even "late finishers" can complete the session within one day.

128. How many test tickets are required for each content area/grade level?

Please see the March 5, 2015 Spotlight.

129. For makeup sessions, do we have to create a different test ticket and test session for those students?

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

If the student's test ticket has never been used for that content test session it will not be necessary to create a new ticket. Please remember that tickets are secure and an un-used ticket must be securely maintained by the Building Test Coordinator.

Text-to-Speech

130. Can you tell us more about the text to speech functions?

Text-to-speech functions as an embedded read aloud support for students needing audio support of written text. A full description of the text-to-speech support can be found in the Supports and Accommodations Manual. However, it should be noted that if students need this support, the support is turned "On" in eDIRECT prior to testing. More information related to the mode, content area, and grade level text-to-speech is available and can be found in the Student Supports and Accommodation Table.

131. In which content areas is text-to-speech available?

There is text to speech available on all four content areas. For more information, please refer to the Student Supports and Accommodation Manual at Table at www.michigan.gov/baa.

132. If a school wants all students to have access to text-to-speech, is that permitted?

Audio supports are generally listed as a designated support and should only be considered as applicable at the individual student level. To designate an audio support for an entire school makes the assumption that 100% of students are poor readers or are auditory learners. This is not likely the case. If you have a strong reader, who may not be as strong in taking in auditory information, and has the audio support turned on, it could actually be a disadvantage and distract the student from fully using their primary area of strength. It is important to remember that any support applied should be one that levels the playing field for a student based on a need (it is not meant to give an advantage) and should be something that the student uses as an intervention or strategy during instruction. For more information, please refer to the Student Supports and Accommodations Table.

Training

133. Are there sample items for student practice?

Student Assessment and Accountability Frequently Asked Questions

The Sample Item Sets are described in the February 12, 2015 Spotlight. The Sample Item Sets may be accessed through Google Chrome at <https://wbte.drcedirect.com/MI/portals/mi/>. In addition, if your school has installed the TSM and INSIGHT software suite, the fully functional Online Sample Item Sets can be accessed through the INSIGHT test engine and selecting the Online Tools Training link.